(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir. The Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Wakf Board has issued a notice for registration of Maqbara Shahjahan and Mumtaj Mahal property known as "Taj Mahal, Agra" under the provision of Section 36 of the Wafk Act, 1995. (Central Act 43 of 1995)

(b) Archaeological Survey of India is of the view that any attempt of registration of Taj Mahal as wakf property by way of issuance of the notice is absolutely illegal, without jurisdiction and contrary to the provision of the said Act. The Central Government has a sovereign right to possess and manage centrally protected monuments and sites of national importance in the country and the authorities of the Wafk Board can not interfere with the same.

Under the provision of the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1904, the preliminary notification No. 1412M dated 18.11.1920 was published in the United Provinces Gazette on 20th November, 1920 and the final notification was issued *vide* No. 1645M/1133 dated 22.12.1920 to declare Taj Mahal, Agra as a protected monuments.

The Taj Mahal, Agra is not only a centrally protected monument and a cultural heritage of national importance but also has been declared by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

Cultural heritage of Delhi

2627. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court has issued a directive to Government to appoint an Expert Committee to look into the Delhi's heritage culture an ensure that these are not sacrificed;

(b) if so, whether such a Committee has been constituted; and

(c) if so its terms of reference and the time-frame within which it would submit its reports?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, an Expert Committee has been constituted under the direction of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in order to prepare a Conservation Management Plan for the Red Fort in Delhi.

Excavation of submerged temples

†2628. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BALAPTE:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that certain States have submitted proposals for the excavating and restoring the temples submerged into lakes/rivers;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the number of such temples/ historical sites, State-wise:

(c) whether Government are contemplating any action to bring them out and restore; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (d) No proposal has been received from the State Governments for excavation of any temple submerged into lakes and rivers. However, in case of the State of Madhya Pradesh, there are proposals of transplantation and preventive measures for two monuments which are under submergence or are likely to be submerged on account of the Narmada Valley Project. The work of transplantation is in progress.

In case of Himachal Pradesh, proposals for transplantation of fifteen temples have also been received and the same are under examination.

Night view of monuments/heritages sites

2629. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to open various monuments/heritages sites for night view like Taj Mahal, to the general public;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.